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Book Marks

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BOOK MARKS

Featuring summaries of books written by Furman faculty and alumni, as well as reviews of books recommended by faculty and staff as "good reads."

RECOMMENDED

Ross King, *Brunelleschi's Dome: How a Renaissance Genius Reinvented Architecture* (Walker & Co., 2000). More than 120 years after the cornerstone was laid on Florence's cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, it came time to decide how best to finish the structure's last but most magnificent piece: a vaulted dome that would be an astonishing 143 feet in diameter at its base. Such an element would require the construction of the highest and widest vault ever attempted — with no visible means of support. This story opens in 1418 as a competition for solving the dome's construction is under way. We are soon immersed in a culture and community that are roiling in bitter social and physical conditions and even harsher rivalries between artists, artisans, guilds and cities. Yet this era is equally remarkable for its mix of talent, perseverance and creative skill. With Filippo Brunelleschi's genius as centerpiece, this book follows the construction process to its triumphant conclusion while staging humanity and art in an entertaining and sometimes baffling drama.

— Steve Richardson '77,
associate librarian

Sue Monk Kidd, *The Secret Life of Bees* (Viking, 2002). With a South Carolina setting and an ethos that is likely to create both nostalgia and melancholy in any woman who came of age in the South in the middle of the 20th century, Kidd weaves a tender story of connection. The story follows young Lily Owens, who is examining her past so that she might better know her self. She encounters the hazards of "otherness" and questions why things have to be as they are. Throughout her experience, Lily is grounded in the security of her relationship with gentle-hearted, strong black women who teach

her much about what really matters in life. The book leans heavily on the wonders of nature and the enduring qualities of faith, even a faith that includes the mysterious Our Lady of Chains.

— Ann Anshus Quattlebaum '64,
coordinator, Lilly Center

FROM ALUMNI

L. Dean Allen '90, *Rise Up, O Men of God: The "Men and Religion Forward Movement" and the "Promise Keepers"* (Mercer University Press, 2002). This marks the first comparative analysis of two major evangelical Christian men's movements in the United States. The Men and Religion Forward Movement of 1911-12 attracted almost 1.5 million. In 1991, Promise Keepers began sponsoring well-publicized conferences for men in athletic stadiums, with attendance totaling more than four million. According to the publisher, "Allen analyzes both groups' constructions of masculinity and social ethics in relation to the family, the church, and a prominent social issue" and discovers that they "developed contrasting constructions of masculinity and divergent social ethical calls for action." MRFM men sought to be "strong, calm, and logical . . . efficient, active and practical leaders in family, church, and society." Promise Keepers worked to establish themselves as servant leaders by developing "an image of men as sensitive, caring and emotionally expressive"

The author is dean of the faculty and vice president for academic affairs at Andover Newton Theological School.

Monte Dutton '80, *Postcards from Pit Road: NASCAR's 2002 Season* (Brassey's Inc., 2003). This diary of a year on the NASCAR circuit is the fifth book by Dutton, an award-winning motorsports reporter for *The Gaston* (N.C.)

Gazette. The publisher says *Postcards* offers "the compelling inside story of the wealthy car owners who pay the bills, the daring drivers who risk life and limb each week, and the harried crewmen who build and service the incredible racing machines with breathtaking efficiency. . . . Dutton goes far beyond the typical facts and figures of each race, instead weaving an insightful account of the daily lives of these modern-day gladiators." Praised by critics and colleagues for his witty, provocative style, Dutton is also editor of *Taking Stock* (2002) and author of *At Speed* (2000), *Jeff Gordon: The Racer* (2000) and *Rebel with a Cause: A Season with NASCAR Star Tony Stewart* (2001).

P. David Lusk '74, *Saul of Tarsus: A Docu-novel* (Essence Publishing, 2003). According to Virgil A. Mitchell, general superintendent emeritus of the Wesleyan Church, this book "seeks to create a deeper appreciation of the life and labors of the great missionary, the Apostle Paul . . . by weaving together the Biblical account of Paul's life within the context of cultural patterns, historical events and traditional customs . . . It is a fascinating presentation worthy of your examination." Paul D. Faulkenberry, retired professor of psychology at Southern Wesleyan University, says the book offers "intriguing glimpses into the life of Saul/Paul as he grew and matured in the cross currents of the first century to become one of the primary intellectuals and spiritual leaders of the era."

FROM FACULTY

Aristide Tessitore (editor), *Aristotle and Modern Politics: The Persistence of Political Philosophy* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2002). The publisher says, "Despite the separation between classical and modern theories of government, contributors to this book find that Aristotle is a useful interlocutor for assessing both possibilities and limitations in contemporary politics. In this collection, noted political scientists, theologians and philosophers discuss the magnitude of Aristotle's presence in contemporary debate and demonstrate some of the ways in which he sheds new light on contemporary problems. This

engaging book also exhibits the persistence of political philosophy at a time when the pervasive influence of 'ideology' and 'historicism' lead many to deny its possibility. Although the authors of these essays differ on the nature of Aristotle's contribution, all are united by the conviction that he has something important to teach citizens of modern political societies."

The editor is a professor of political science at Furman.

Ronald J. Granieri, *The Ambivalent Alliance: Konrad Adenauer, the CDU/CSU, and the West, 1949-1966* (Berghahn Books, 2003). When asked to name his greatest accomplishment as West Germany's first chancellor, Konrad Adenauer would invariably reply: "The alliance with the free West." Scholars also consider integration into the American-led West the key to West German postwar recovery. But even as they built the alliance with the West, Adenauer and his party, the CDU/CSU, remained ambivalent about the ultimate relationship between Europe, Germany and the United States, torn between Continental European integration based on Franco-German reconciliation and an Atlantic community linking Europe and the "Anglo-Saxons." Granieri, an associate professor of history at Furman, takes advantage of recently opened archives to trace the ambivalence behind images of Cold War unity and to explore a legacy that still influences contemporary German-American and European-American relations.

Shusuke Yagi, co-translator, *Japanese View of Nature: The World of Living Things by Kinji Imanishi* (Routledge/Curzon, 2002). Yagi, an associate professor of Japanese and Asian Studies at Furman, helped with this first translation of Imanishi's influential book into English and wrote the foreword to the book. Imanishi's work, which is based on a wide knowledge of science and the natural world, was originally published in Japan in 1941 and had an enormous impact in the country because of its distinctive view of nature and how it should be studied. It is particularly important as a background to ecology, primatology and human social evolution theory in Japan.